

Module 7

Foundational Classroom Management Strategies

September 25:

Dear Journal:

This is going to sound really simple, but it did work. All last week, the kids never would settle down. I was constantly saying, "Sit down! Be quiet!" Even I was getting sick of hearing my own voice. Then my coop made this tape recording of me and didn't tell me. WOW! I never would have guessed. There I was, starting the lesson before the kids had even quit talking. What a simple little thing! All I did was stand motionless at the front of the classroom and make eye contact with students who were talking. They settled right down. Then the teacher actually counted down with her fingers (10-9-8 ...1) and there was 10 seconds of perfect quiet from the time the last students talked until I began my lesson. It seemed like forever, but when I listened to it on the tape afterwards, it sure was better than the way it was going before. So, I guess it is possible to regain their attention afterwards

Today, I spent one class period in the kindergarten room; it made me lonely for T.

AM

Dealing with Minor Infractions of the Code of Conduct

It is important to make a distinction between a major and a minor violation of the code of conduct. Make a list of common classroom misbehaviours and then classify them as to whether they are major or minor violations. A few examples of each have been provided for you.

Major Violations	Minor Violations
Bringing a knife to school.	Forgetting homework in a locker.
Sneaking into the opposite sex washroom and writing graffiti on the wall	Talking with a friend as class began.
Running a car up on the front lawn	Delaying coming in from recess

Many people have difficulty determining what is major and what is minor. It is relatively easy to determine the difference between extremes; however, there are many misbehaviours that cause concern. Because deciding whether a misbehaviour is major or minor is a judgement call, teachers need to have some guidelines for making the call.

Using a process akin to concept attainment, it is possible to construct a definition of major and minor violations that can assist us in categorizing future misbehaviours. The characteristics that distinguish minor violations from major violations can be used to write a definition. For example, a major violation can be defined as:

Major Violations: actions which cause physical, social or emotional harm to another person. that violate a core moral code, or which inflict significant cost to another person.

By contrast, a minor violation can be defined as:

Minor Violations: actions that cause small annoyances and inconveniences, that violate a principle of etiquette, that interfere primarily

with the offender's life and which are non-violent.

Minor and infrequent infractions are dealt with very differently. Minor violations primarily are met with low key, incidental classroom management strategies, while major violations often require individuals to discuss what happened and what needs to happen in the future.

Four authors have predominated the work in the area of foundational skills appropriate for minor violations. Though other models may contribute unique component to the classroom management, the four included here have been selected for their common sense approaches to minor violations of the codes of conduct.

Each theorist who developed a set of classroom management skills worked from a particular philosophy about education and students. When considering the strategies each suggests, it is important to look for the assumptions that are inherent in the model. Identifying these values is crucial if your approach to classroom management is to reflect your value

Redl and Wattenberg Model

Fritz Redl and William Wattenberg, co-authors of "Mental Hygiene in Teaching" (1951; 1959) were among the first theorists to offer specific classroom management techniques for teachers. They recognize the importance of group dynamics within the classroom and believe that discipline must address group psychology. The expectations of the group "create conditions such that its members will behave in certain ways" (p. 267); at the same time, the behaviour of the individual affects the group. Influencing techniques help the teacher address classroom management with a group focus.

Group Roles

It is important to recognize that students may adopt one of a variety of roles in the classroom. Such roles can impact individual behaviour as well as influence

classroom climate if not addressed by the teacher. The primary roles include:

Leaders who assume positive leadership roles. These leadership roles may be taken on by a student naturally or appointed by the teacher,

Clowns who are class entertainers and who may be disruptive or beneficial sources of fun,

Fall Guys who willingly take any blame or punishment directed at the class to gain classmates' approval,

Instigators who are at the root of a disruption but appear to be uninvolved,

Scapegoats who are targets for hostility or rejection from the rest of the group, perhaps even by the teacher.

Teacher's Pets who are consistently favoured by the teacher in some manner.

Dealing with the myriad of roles that students adopt requires a wide range of influencing techniques.

Influencing Techniques

There are four general strategies that allow the teacher flexibility to maintain classroom control. Redl and Wattenberg believe that any action taken by the teacher should follow reflection on two considerations: (a) how will the student react, and (b) how will future behaviour be affected? After classroom expectations and consequences are clearly set out they recommend several choices.

Supporting Self-Control: Teachers use low-key techniques to help the student regain control of his or her own behaviour with minimum guidance from the teacher. In most cases a gentle reminder is all students need to get back on track. These techniques include:

Sending Signals: Teachers use eye contact and other body language, such as a finger to the lips or a shake of the head, to show disapproval or awareness

of the inappropriate behaviour.

Proximity Control: Teachers move closer to students to encourage student self-control. Often just the teacher's presence can provide the motivation the student requires to resume appropriate behaviour. Proximity may also include a gentle, friendly touch on the student's shoulder.

Humour: Teachers use respectful humour to remind students to remain in control.

Showing Interest: Teachers display an interest in what the student is working on and reinforces his or her interest. This is adopted when teachers are certain students understand their assignment. Comments such as, "Your answer to question two is very creative; how will you bring this story to resolution?", bring the focus back on the subject at hand without a harsh or negative interaction.

Ignoring: Teachers overlook inappropriate behaviour to discourage attention seeking habits. Students should be aware the teacher is intentionally ignoring the misbehaviour.

Situational Assistance: Situational assistance involves direct guidance from the teacher to assist students to behave appropriately when self-control fails. Examples of this include:

Hurdle Help: Teachers help students who are unclear about course content and expectations. Students' problems are addressed regarding the assignment and judgements are not made because the student is not working.

Restructuring the Situation: Teachers restructure the activity to maintain student interest or provide variety. For example, after a stimulating lesson with verbal debates reflective journal provides pacing variety and a calming environment.

Establishing Routines: Teachers emphasize order and consistency in daily activities such as taking attendance and moving into groups.

Removing the Seductive Object: Teachers re-focus student attention by confiscating distracting objects. Objects are returned to the student at an appropriate time.

Removing the Student: Teachers allow students to regain self-control privately. This is a non-punitive technique that involves no teacher anger or revenge meeting between teacher and student follows to facilitate open communication.

Reality Appraisal: Reality appraisal involves teachers providing explanations to clarify student expectations or inappropriate behaviours. For example, "Everyone must hand in their assignments on time to ensure they will have an opportunity to make corrections before the exam" is more effective than "No late assignments". Students are likely to respond well to expectations when they understand the underlying reasons for them. In addition, teachers state the desired behaviour to ensure clarity of student expectations.

Pain-Pleasure Principle: The pain-pleasure principal addresses unpleasant consequences for unacceptable student behaviour. Consequences must be natural and understandable given the particular misbehaviour. Teachers convey that consequences are a result of caring about the student and not a result of anger. It is important teachers follow through on their promises and do not use threats. Threats are seldom carried out, are intimidating, and create fear and anxiety in the students. Effective teachers use reality appraisal, not threats, to gain student cooperation.

Jones Model

Fredric H. Jones, a psychologist who created a discipline model after conducting years of observation in elementary and secondary classrooms during the 1970's, wrote *Positive Classroom Discipline and Positive Classroom Instruction*. Jones believes the key to classroom management is addressing potential problems or minor disruptions before they escalate. He estimates that 50% of instructional time is lost dealing with misbehaviour (1987a) that results from the mismanagement of classroom routines. Jones asserts that the teacher's physical presence and body language, along with clear classroom expectations increases order and decreases disruptions. Key skills include: (a) classroom organization, (b) instructional strategies, and (c) limit setting.

Classroom Organization:

Classroom organization consists of two key components. These are:

Rules and Routines: Teachers who create and enforce clear rules and expectations, are appreciated by their students. Rules need to be taught and retaught throughout the year. As well, teachers support rules by providing specific examples of acceptable behaviours and do not rely on general guidelines. They allow students to express their views about the rules to ensure their cooperation. Dictatorial approach to enforce rules does not encourage a positive relationship between teachers and students. An atmosphere of trust is necessary to help students make responsible choices.

Seating Arrangements: Teacher control and design of student and desk arrangements are paramount to ensuring classroom order. To eliminate challenges, students are informed immediately that teachers create the seating plan. Initially, the plan is random but is later modified to accommodate students who are prone to misbehave. Teachers must have physical proximity to students. Traditionally arranged classrooms, with desks placed in long rows, prevent student accessibility. Shallow semicircles, groupings of two or three desks with a minimum of rows, create plenty of walk-space and allow teachers to reach students with ease.

Instructional Strategies:

Teachers can ensure student productivity with the following techniques:

Post Reminders: Teachers avoid many disruptive and time consuming questions from students who are "stuck" during independent class work. Posters or charts that provide clear instructions or examples prevent unnecessary requests for help. Simple routines, such as writing the assignment on the board and providing examples that illustrate the procedure, provide students with basic reminders.

Praise-Prompt-Leave Sequence: Teachers use a quick, effective method to respond to student requests for help. Most disruptive behaviour occurs once the teacher has assigned independent seat work. Students, seeking teacher assistance, begin to misbehave when teachers spend too much time with one student. The praise-prompt-leave sequence addresses this problem. First, teacher's praise what the student has done correctly. They avoid general comments such as, "Good start" and provide specific feedback, "You have correctly defined all the variables". Secondly, teachers provide a one-step prompt such as "Follow step three on the outline" or "Now write the relationship between the variables". Students become confused when teachers review too many concepts at once. In the final step, the teacher leaves to allow the student to carry out the prompt independently. Leaving after a prompt indicates a teacher's confidence in the student's ability to perform the task and enables the teacher to reach more students quickly. The dependency pattern for continual feedback is broken and students are working, not misbehaving.

Setting Limits:

Teachers who "mean business" are successful classroom managers because they maintain control by remaining calm and setting clear limits. Body language and physical proximity are powerful techniques to convey expectations and the teacher's interpersonal power series of steps are outlined, teachers employ as many as required until the student stops the misbehaviour.

Awareness: Teachers have "eyes in the back of their heads". They attend to

everything in the class by listening intently and observing all students.

Terminating Instruction: Teachers stop instruction when a student misbehaves. Student discipline is a primary issue and must be addressed immediately. Hand gestures to indicate they are stopping instruction or a verbal cue, "I will continue in a moment", let students know that misbehaviour will not be tolerated.

Eye Contact While Saying the Student's Name: Teachers look disruptive students in the eye. Students will not be convinced of teacher commitment or self-confidence if eye contact falters steady look with an expressionless face conveys a serious manner slight smile on a teacher's face indicates amusement or submission, a frown reveals impatience or anger. Teachers exhibit self-control.

The name of the misbehaving student is stated in a calm, controlled manner. Students understand clearly who is misbehaving and that they are being observed. Often a student will resume work at this point however, there are students who will further test the teacher's limits.

Moving to the Student's Desk: Teachers display a calm exterior as they move to the edge of the student's desk. They say nothing as they at the front of the offending student's desk. Direct eye contact is maintained until appropriate behaviour is resumed.

Using Palms: Next, teachers place their palms on the student's desk and provide a verbal command such as, "Continue your English assignment now." If this does not bring about the desired response, the teacher leans in further while maintaining eye contact.

Moving Out: Teachers always thank students when they return to their work. To ensure the student understands he or she is still being monitored, teachers move away slowly while continuing their observation.

Camping Out: Teachers move into the student's space as a final step to gain order. They rest their elbows on the student's desk to improve eye contact and increase proximity. Students will often engage in some form of back talk, to attempt to gain control over the teacher.

Insulting comments are an attempt to shock the teacher into moving away. Teachers are prepared to hear personal insults, comments as to their lack of teaching ability, or demands to be left alone. They remain silent, maintain the camping-out position, and wait for the student to resume work. Discussions between teacher and student never have an audience.

Teachers are not drawn into student attempts to change the subject or redirect blame. Statements such as "I didn't do anything. Leave me alone!" ; "It's Waldo's fault!" or "You never explain anything, I don't get it," are ignored. Students resort to excuses to avoid accepting responsibility for their work. There is no excuse for misbehaviour, however.

Preferred Activity Time: Finally, teachers encourage students to cooperate and accept responsibility through positive reinforcement. Personal time is a great motivational strategy, and students work to achieve some "Preferred Activity Time" or PAT. Negative sanctions are imposed if all else fails. Administration and parents, a last resort, are used as a point of negotiation with students.

Canter Model

Lee Canter and his wife, Marlene, conduct workshops throughout the United States to promote **Canter's Assertive Discipline**. Their first publication was in 1976, *Assertive Discipline: a take-charge approach for today's educator*. Canter emphasized the teacher's needs when creating a classroom management plan, and asserts that students appreciate firm discipline in the classroom. Parental and administrative involvement are utilized to create a team approach to discipline.

There are three possible response styles that teachers typically employ when they interact with students. **non-assertive style** reflects a teacher's failure to communicate clear expectations, or to respond decisively to misbehaviour. These teachers ignore misbehaviour and use empty threats. Students soon realize that there is no follow through to any attempts at discipline. **hostile response pattern** involves emotional and verbal abuse. Hostile teachers lose their temper and make personally degrading remarks to students. Threats of violence are common, and the rights of students are violated in this response style.

Canter recommends that teachers clearly **communicate rules and routines**, as well as **consequences for misbehaviour**, in an **assertive pattern of response**. Students know that consequences are implemented and that the **teacher is consistent and firm**.

There are four aspects to assertive discipline: a) establishing rules, b) tracking misbehaviour, c) use of negative consequences or punishment, and d) positive consequences.

Rules and Expectations:

Teachers set the rules and keep them on display for future reference. Their expectations reflect their own needs but are not unreasonable demands. Each rule or expectation is thoroughly explained and consequences clearly outlined. Canter uses the term "consequences", however Dreikurs and Glasser would argue that "punishment" more aptly defines Canter's construct.

Tracking Misbehaviour:

Teachers employ various techniques to monitor misbehaviour. They record infractions of rules by writing the offending student's name on the board and add a check-mark for each subsequent violation. Consequences are enforced based on the number of check-marks accumulated.

Assertive language is a key component to maintain classroom order. Important elements are a firm tone of voice, direct eye contact, and use of students' names.

Assertive teachers use a "**broken record technique**" to communicate expectations. Ignoring any excuses, the teacher simply repeats the request, "Elsa, sit down and work on your assignment now." The teacher repeats the request until the student complies. After three repetitions, the student is reminded of possible consequences.

Finally, Canter recommended that teachers use **touch to reinforce verbal commands**. He believed that a firm touch adds impact provided it is not abusive or rough in nature. Given the societal situation in which schools are contextualized in the 1990s, this recommendation is no longer realistic.

Negative Consequences:

Negative consequences are described as promises to enforce limits within the classroom. The following are effective punishments:

Time-out: Teachers isolate a misbehaving student from the rest of the class. The time-out area should be within the classroom for elementary school children.

Withdrawing a Privilege: Teachers revoke any activity that students consider meaningful. Students are prevented from extracurricular participation in various school teams or clubs. Denial of personal free time in class or withdrawal of special class activities effectively persuade students to comply.

Detention: Teachers detain students beyond regular school hours.

Principal's Office: Teachers can utilize the principal's office as an effective deterrent. Administration can easily implement more severe penalties, such as suspension or expulsion.

Parental Involvement: Teachers send notes or telephone the student's parents to enlist their help. Parents may set up punishments at home that reinforce the importance of appropriate behaviour at school.

Classroom Exchange: Teachers banish the misbehaving student to another classroom to complete his or her assignment. Prior arrangements with the other teacher are made so the plan is implemented smoothly.

Tape Recording: Teachers tape record disruptive students to provide an accurate picture of the misbehaviour exhibited. The offending student is made aware of the recording device. Often the knowledge that he or she is being recorded effectively eliminates inappropriate behaviour.

Positive Consequences:

Teachers encourage favourable attitudes and student cooperation through the use of positive consequences. Some suggestions include **positive notes or phone calls to parents**. Too often parents only hear from teachers when their children have done something wrong. Teachers utilize **awards or rewards** such as plaques, certificates or any material rewards to interest students. Small toys, stickers, pencils, and crayons are popular incentives.

Teachers offer **individual privileges** such as taking attendance, running errands for the teacher, tutoring others, or extra computer time. They also provide opportunities for the **entire class to earn rewards**. Dropping marbles in a jar each time the class is working well reinforces class cooperation and productivity. When the jar is full some special class activity, such as a field trip, is planned.

Finally, an incentive never to be underrated, is **personal attention from the**

teacher. Sharing tea or lunch with the teacher, helping after school, or working on a special project together are strong reinforcers. Canter asserts a mix of positive consequences, with clear limits and punishments, provides the best environment to ensure proper behaviour in the classroom.

Kounin Model

Jacob Kounin, a college professor, spent two decades analysing teachers and classroom management. The results were published in *Discipline and Group Management in Classrooms* (1971, 1977). He discovered effective teachers used similar techniques to maintain student productivity. Kounin's research addressed effective lesson management, as well as student discipline. He asserts that the teachers' actions are powerful and can have either positive or negative effects on students.

Successful delivery of lessons went beyond mastery of the subject content. Pacing and maintaining group focus are key elements to promote student involvement and reduce misbehaviour. "**Withitness**" is Kounin's term to describe teacher awareness in the classroom. Effective teachers employed withitness for lesson delivery, as well as student desists. Kounin discovered nothing new, but has highlighted techniques used by successful teachers in the field.

Desists and Ripple Effect:

Teacher desists, or statements to stop misbehaviour, have a ripple effect in the classroom. The misbehaving student is not the only student who is affected by the reprimand ripple effect describes the phenomenon where students who witness the desist, are less likely to misbehave.

Kounin examined different types of desists with the ripple effect in classrooms. **Clarity** when delivering desists is more effective than a vague reprimand such as "That's enough now". Teachers who specifically state the inappropriate behaviour, explain the reason for the desist, and provide acceptable alternatives are most successful in stopping misbehaviour. For example, "Eleanor, stop poking Homer with your pencil. It is distracting and may injure him. Turn around and work on your own assignment" provides clarity for the student.

a serious manner or firmness adds impact to a desist and is conveyed

through tone of voice, eye contact, and proximity. Rough desists involve anger, threats, or physical handling and are to be avoided.

The **ripple effect** is most pronounced when teachers use clear and firm desists. Elementary school children are most responsive to the ripple effect. However, in high schools, the success of the ripple effect is positively correlated to the esteem the students hold for the teacher.

Withitness:

Teachers who know what is happening in the classroom at all times displays withitness. Students' perception that teachers have "eyes in the backs of their heads" prevents continuous testing of the limits. Students are convinced that the teacher is fully aware of any misbehaviour taking place.

Teachers who are withit have successful **targeting and timing** skills. Targeting consists of two components, the first is to distinguish the instigator from the onlookers. Teachers who target, or blame, the wrong student encourage more disruptions because instigators believe they can avoid detection.

Withit teachers **ignore** minor misbehaviours to address more serious infractions of the rules. The teacher's credibility is lost if he or she reprimands a student for sharpening a pencil, and misses two students exchanging blows in the back corner.

Teachers who display withitness know when to intervene to **avoid contagious misbehaviour**. Teachers who do not act quickly may discover a minor disruption can become a serious disturbance. For example, a few teasing comments from one student to another can escalate into a physical altercation if left unchecked. Effective desists are directed toward the target student(s), and are well timed.

Overlapping:

Teachers who successfully address more than one situation at a time in the classroom use overlapping skills. For example, a teacher is able to coordinate and monitor group work while assisting an individual student. Behavioural problems

occur if teachers consistently interrupt instruction or activities to address minor disruptions.

Lesson Management:

Teachers use various skills to maintain student interest and motivation that limit opportunities for misbehaviour. They **pace** their lessons and activities carefully to **maintain student involvement**. Well-organized teachers **avoid awkward transitions** from one task to another, and do not lose momentum by dwelling on a particular topic. Teachers who **structure their lessons** avoid inadequate instructions, discontinuity, and irrelevant information.

Teachers who **keep all students participating** and involved in the lesson exhibit group focus. Simple techniques such as **asking a question, waiting, and then directing** it to a student to answer, **requesting other students to comment** on the answer provided, and **randomly choosing students** create an atmosphere of suspense. This can focus the attention of students and prevent predictability in class discussions.

Finally, it is critical that teachers **incorporate variety** into their lessons. Bored students become mischievous students. Varying **content, methods of presentation, and levels of difficulty** help to stimulate student interest.

In conclusion, Kounin recognizes the importance of the teacher's role to classroom participation. However, **students are held accountable** for their own learning. Creating a conducive learning environment sets the stage for a classroom with few behaviour problems.

Eclectic Models

While the techniques are presented here theorist by theorist, there is considerable overlap between the specific strategies. One approach to conceptualizing the strategies is to rank-order them from least to most physically intrusive. You may also wish to reorganize them by classifying the intervention as moving from nonverbal through to verbal. Regardless of the classification system, in practice, teachers tend to clump several of these techniques together.

It is also important to consider the assumptions and values that each of these strategies reflect. Each intern and each teacher must come to an independent decision as to which techniques fit and do not fit his or her value system.

Activity

Watch the video prepared as an anchor for this course. Pay particular attention to the words that are spoken and the tone of voice in which they are spoken by the models in the clips. Note your reaction to each of these strategies. During the course of the internship, notice the number of times your co-operating teacher uses these techniques and the different combinations of techniques that are brought together.

Beginning to Write

Assignment 1.3: Optional Outline

Reflective Summary of Dealing with Minor & Infrequent Violations

Intern: _____ **Student #:** _____

Tentative Plan *(To Be Completed During Orientation Day)*

Intern's Observations on Implementation & Notes on Dialogue with Cooperating Teacher *(Attach Data/Notes Gathered During Implementation)*

Reflections on Implementation *(To Be Completed During Class Session Sept 14, 1998)*

Beginning to Write

Assignment 1: (approx. 10 min)
 A summary of the following text about a language feature.

Student ID: _____

Project: _____

<p>1. The first part of the text is about the importance of the first sentence. It says that the first sentence should be clear and concise. It should also be interesting and catch the reader's attention. The first sentence should also be relevant to the topic of the text.</p>
<p>2. The second part of the text is about the importance of the second sentence. It says that the second sentence should provide more information about the first sentence. It should also be clear and concise. The second sentence should also be relevant to the topic of the text.</p>
<p>3. The third part of the text is about the importance of the third sentence. It says that the third sentence should provide more information about the second sentence. It should also be clear and concise. The third sentence should also be relevant to the topic of the text.</p>